

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
January 16, 2007**



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DAVID L. HUBER
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
Western District of Kentucky**

**Contact: Sandy Focken
(502) 582-5911**

THREE MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING

– Abiel Perez is illegally in the United States

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, announced today that **JONATHAN FUGATE**, age 48, of 94 Locust Street, Nortonville, Kentucky; **RICHARD BAIZE**, age 48, of 94 Locust Street, Nortonville, Kentucky; and **ABIEL PEREZ**, age 42, of 15818 Tamany Lane, Houston, Texas; pled guilty to trafficking in methamphetamine. **Perez** is illegally in the United States and is subject to deportation after serving his sentence.

If convicted, the maximum potential penalties are life imprisonment, a \$4,000,000 fine, and supervised release for a period of not less than 5 years.

On February 26, 2006, **Baize, Fugate, and Perez** were arrested after the DEA received a tip that methamphetamine was going to be transported to Kentucky on that date. Specifically, these three individuals were stopped and detained as they drove a blue and white van into Nortonville. After a K-9 alert and parole search, the officers obtained a search warrant for the vehicle and home, finding methamphetamine, cash, and drug paraphernalia.

On May 3, 2006, the Grand Jury returned an indictment charging **Fugate, Baize, Perez** and four other individuals with conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing methamphetamine. Methamphetamine has a street value of approximately \$100 per gram.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Madison T. Sewell, and it was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Madisonville Police Department..

The pleas were entered before Judge Joseph McKinley, United States District Court, Owensboro, Kentucky.

These defendants are scheduled to be sentenced before Joseph McKinley, Judge, United States District Court, on April 12, 2007 at 9:00 a.m., in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Co-defendants **Daniel Zamorano** and **Theresa Tapp** are set for a plea before Judge McKinley on January 25, 2007 at 9:00 a.m.

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